



NEWS RELEASE

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Using Antifreeze To Keep Ice Holes Open Can Pollute the State's Waters

BISMARCK, N.D. – People ice fishing on North Dakota's lakes are warned not to use antifreeze to keep ice holes from freezing because the chemicals can pollute the water, according to the North Dakota Department of Health and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department.

Chemicals such as ethylene glycol, diethylene glycol, propylene glycol and methanol are commonly found in windshield washing fluids, gas-line antifreeze, and RV and marine antifreeze and summer coolants. These chemicals are regulated by state and federal laws because of their potentially dangerous impacts to human, aquatic and animal health. For example, it takes only two ounces of ethylene glycol antifreeze to kill a dog.

"The North Dakota Game and Fish Department has reported several cases of people using antifreeze chemicals to keep ice holes open," said Terry Steinwand, chief of the Game and Fish Department's Fisheries Division. "Right now, we believe the use of these contaminants is not very widespread and their impact to lakes has been negligible. However, we are deeply concerned that if this practice becomes more common, contamination will occur."

North Dakota law prohibits the contamination of the state's waters. "It's important for people to recognize the hazards that these chemicals pose to our lakes and rivers," said Dennis Fewless, director of the North Dakota Department of Health's Division of Water Quality. "We hope a little education will help avoid serious problems down the road."

For more information, contact Mike Ell, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.5210.

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